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## NOTES AND COMMENT

### AN AMERICAN SHIP-BUILDER FOR SPANISH CALIFORNIA

Professor Chapman, in his chapter on the difficulties experienced by the viceroy of New Spain in maintaining the Department of San Blas (a department which might better have been called the Department of the Californias), refers briefly to a ship-builder named Francisco Segurola who was sent from Spain to this station in 1777. The present writer, in his investigations in the Archivo General de Indias, has discovered certain documents which give the interesting sequel of this matter. These documents are contained in an *expediente* dealing with Segurola's attempt to secure a larger salary than that assigned to him by the viceroy, and to get the government to defray the expenses of his journey from Spain to San Blas. Segurola's first representation on this subject was made within a few months of his arrival in Mexico, and the final decision—in his favor—was made by a royal order some eight years later, on February 18, 1787, seven months after Segurola's death. The viceroy was directed to pay to the son of Segurola the amount due the latter as a result of the decision in his case.

Segurola being dead, it was necessary to provide another ship-builder to take his place. In the royal order referred to above it is said:

And in regard to the matter of a ship-builder for the Department of San Blas the king has resolved that you [the viceroy] shall ask Don Diego Gardoqui, our agent in the American colonies, to send one, taking care that he be a person of much ability and well instructed in his craft.

At the same time the minister of the Indies wrote to Gardoqui about the matter, directing him to send to Mexico such a person, in case he should be successful in finding one. Gardoqui attended to the business promptly, apparently having no particular difficulty in finding, among the sea-faring people of New England, a person suitably qualified to supply this particular need of New Spain. The man selected by him was Mr. John Ficus Morgan of Boston, among whose recommendations was a certificate signed at Boston, January 16, 1788, by John Hancock, James Bowdoin, and others, stating that Morgan was a master ship-builder of that city.

In due time Morgan arrived at Havana, from which point the governor wrote to the viceroy informing him of the coming of the American. Viceroy Florez, who had come into office after the instructions given to Gardoqui, did not like this arrangement and immediately so told the home government. In a letter to Valdes, the minister of the Indies, dated April 26, 1788, he says:

I was ignorant of this provision until the receipt of a letter from the governor of Havana, dated the thirteenth of last March, in which he advised me of the arrival at that port and the proximate arrival at Veracruz in the frigate Biviana of the ship-builder referred to, Mr. John Ficus Morgan. I take it as a matter of course that this foreigner is very good, and well qualified; but it does not seem to me convenient to employ him in these dominions, and much less in the construction of ships for a port like that of San Blas, which sustains our recent establishments in California, which facilitates the explorations to the north of that coast, which provides the means of impeding the intentions of Russia, and which, finally, serves as a port for the ships of Callao de Lima and the Philippines. All of these reasons compel me to suspend the carrying out of the royal order [referred to]. My purpose is to detain Morgan here, providing him at the expense of Real Hacienda whatever may be necessary for his decent and comfortable subsistence until the king authorizes me to send this foreigner back to his own country. This seems to me best, and that there shall come from Spain a good ship-builder with the requisite qualifications, since none is to be had in Havana.

A few days later the viceroy wrote again, saying that he had just received a letter from Gardoqui giving the terms of the contract made with Morgan, and that he had written a letter of thanks to the former. He then goes on:

Far from having reasons for changing the views, which I explained to you in my recent letter, about the inconvenience of assigning to this kingdom the colonist Morgan, I adhere to them fully, and I am sending this letter . . . asking you to please inform me of the sovereign resolution of the king, since in the meantime I will carry out the contract which Don Diego Gardoqui made with this foreigner, detaining him in this capital, toward which he is en route with two young carpenters ('dos muchachos carpinteros') of the same nation, as the governor of Veracruz has just advised me.

This was on May 7, 1788. The reply to these letters was written at San Ildefonso on September 17, the viceroy being informed that the king has seen fit to approve what he has done in the matter and has directed that Morgan be sent back to his own country, his salary and expenses being so adjusted as to leave him satisfied and contented. The final document in the case of Morgan is the viceroy's letter of February 26, 1789, in which he states that as a result of the royal

order of September 17 he has arranged for the return to New York of the American ship-builder, appending to the letter a statement showing the amounts paid to Morgan, the total, for salary and expenses of transportation, being 2,310 pesos, 2 tombines, and 8 granos. This sum may therefore be taken as the cost of the year's vacation enjoyed by Mr. John Ficus Morgan, ship-builder of Boston, at the expense of the king of Spain.

At the same time that the king made the decision announced in the letter of September 17, he also ordered that the chief engineer of the navy should nominate a ship-builder to be sent to San Blas. By a curious coincidence that slow-moving functionary made his nomination just one day before the viceroy wrote his final letter in regard to Morgan. The person nominated was Manuel Bastarrachea of Ferrol, who after his arrival at San Blas had much the same difficulty in regard to his salary and expenses as that experienced by Seguro.<sup>1</sup>

RALPH S. KUYKENDALL,  
Native Sons Fellow in Pacific  
Coast History, 1921-1922.

Seville, Spain,  
February 20, 1922.

#### A NEW FLORIDA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The following circular has just come into our hands, and it is of so interesting a nature that it is reproduced in full:

The Florida State Historical Society was founded December 1, 1921, by some citizens of the State of Florida and northerners who were interested in the history of the State. To these individuals it seemed desirable to form a society of a different character from that of any already existing in the State, having for its object study and research in history that has a direct bearing on Florida. There being in existence a great mass of original manuscript material relating to Florida, one of the Society's first duties will be to make some of those documents accessible.

It is the opinion of the founders that the close association with an institution of learning will assist materially in accomplishing the purposes of the Society, and therefore it has been organized to work in close harmony with, although independent of, so far as its own organization is concerned, the John B. Stetson University.

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<sup>1</sup> In regard to this interesting incident, Mr. Kuykendall says: "It seemed to me that this little incident is another confirmation of what has been remarked in other connections, that the fear of the new American republic was rather keener in New Spain than in Old Spain, and also that the officials in Mexico were more vigilant in guarding the interests of Spain in American than those in Spain were in foreseeing some possible contingencies."

Eventually, the Society is expected to perform all of the functions stated in its charter, but it will for the present confine itself to the publication of new material or the reprinting of rare material pertaining to Florida history. To accomplish this, a full enrollment of two hundred and fifty sustaining members is required. The obligation assumed by those who become sustaining members is to subscribe for the publications of the Society as they are issued, at approximately the cost of production. Preliminary plans call for from two to four volumes a year. At present the Society has no salaried employees. Its publications will be limited to three hundred copies each, of which two hundred and fifty will be sold to the sustaining members, the other fifty being retained for future use, such as sale to institutions which may require the full sets. The volumes will be printed on fine paper, and many will contain illustrations.

The Society will start its publications with some very important new works on Florida history. Among them is a biography and bibliography of Bernard Romans, with a reproduction of his map of Florida, prepared by Mr. Philip Lee Phillips of the Library of Congress; a Treatise on the Aborigines of Florida by Dr. Aleš Hrdlička of the Smithsonian Institution; and a Treatise on the Loyalists of Florida, prepared by Dr. Wilbur H. Siebert, head of the Department of History of Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Mrs. Washington E. Connor, of New York City, who has for some years been receiving transcripts of documents in the archives of Seville which pertain to Florida history, will edit and translate several volumes containing these documents, never before published. The volumes will be among the most important recent contributions to State histories and will furnish the proper fundamental data for the writing of a history of Florida in the future. The first two volumes will contain some of the official reports and letters written by Governors Pedro Menéndez Márquez and Gonzalo Méndez de Canço to the King of Spain, Philip II, and many documents relating to the Franciscan Fathers, including a collection of letters of Father Francisco Pareja. Mrs. Connor has now in hand a sufficient number of unpublished documents concerning the seventeenth century in Florida to fill about ten volumes. These will be prepared for publication as soon as possible.

In the not distant future facsimile editions of such works as Ribaut's Account of Florida will be made, and also of the Account of the Gentleman of Elvas. Of the former but one copy is known to exist, and of the latter but two. There are in all a dozen exceedingly rare printed accounts of Florida of about this period, which will, sooner or later, be reproduced in facsimile.

At some time in the future reprints will be made of the rare documents relating to Oglethorpe's expedition against St. Augustine, of which so few copies are known that only the larger libraries in the United States have them.

It is the hope of the Society that in a few years its publications will supply a faithful and exact historical account of the State, to which all who are interested in Florida history may refer. Heretofore the State history has been almost inaccessible, either because of the scarcity of the printed books or because of the fact that the records were buried in foreign archives.

The receipt of this prospectus is an invitation to become a sustaining member of the Society. Those who are interested in doing so will kindly sign the enclosed pledge and return it to the secretary, Mr. C. B. Rosa, DeLand, Florida. Additional information will be gladly furnished in correspondence with the said secretary.

The *South Florida Developer*, which is published at Deland, Florida, in its issue of February 19, 1922, reports that the first meeting of the Florida State Historical Society was held at the Hotel College Arms. At that time officers of the society were confirmed, namely, Dean C. P. Carson, professor of history at Stetson University, president; Mrs. Washington E. Connor, of New Smyrna and New York, vice president; C. B. Rosa, bursar of Stetson University, secretary; S. A. Wood, president of the Volusia County Bank and Trust Company, treasurer. Councillors were also confirmed as follows: Governor Cary A. Hardee, Senator Duncan H. Fletcher, John B. Stetson, Jr., of Philadelphia and Deland, W. A. MacWilliams, of St. Augustine, Peter C. Knight, of Tampa, Kirke Munroe, of Coccoanut Grove, President A. A. Murphree, of the University of Florida, John J. Paul, of Watertown, Dr. Lincoln Hulley, president of Stetson University, DeLand, J. Franklin Jameson, of Carnegie Institution of Washington, George Parker Winship, of Harvard University, Mrs. W. S. Jennings, of Jacksonville, and C. B. Reynolds, of St. Augustine.

A committee to pass on all publications to be issued by the society is to consist of Mrs. Connor and Messrs. Winship, Jameson, and Stetson. By a resolution taken at this meeting, every assistance was offered to the Historical Pageant Association. Among the immediate plans of the society is the obtaining of a quarter thousand of sustaining members who will agree to take at cost each of the publications issued by the society. The desirability of having a full set of publications placed in each county seat in the state for the information of all citizens was discussed at some length.

The new society will begin publishing almost immediately. Dr. Hrdlicka's *The Aboriginal Inhabitants of Florida* is in press, as is also Mr. Phillip's Map of Bernard Romans, which is accompanied by a biography and bibliography. Both volumes are expected to appear before the end of the present year. Professor Siebert has already done considerable work on his *Loyalists of Florida*. Dr. Winship is now obtaining photographs of the De Brahms Papers in London in order that they may be compared with the Harvard documents, so that a correct text may be obtained. Mrs. Connor expects to have two volumes of her documents on Florida ready for publication by Christmas of this year.

On request, Mr. John B. Stetson, Jr., commented on the work of the society as follows: "Steps have been taken to obtain information relative to original Florida material with a view toward publishing

anything important that can be found. Florida is about the last state in the union to undertake such a work. The field for work is enormous. There is less accessible material for Florida than for any other state in the union. In printed works dealing with Florida, there is practically nothing to be found relating to the period 1600-1763, except Barcia's *Ensaio Cronológico* and a few of the Montiano Letters dealing with the invasion of Florida by Governor More, also the four pamphlets on Oglethorpe's invasion of Florida. There is a tremendous mass of material in the Library of Congress dealing with the second Spanish occupation, but so far I am not acquainted with any published works other than a few passing references of travelers.

"The councillors of the society believe that it is advisable to have a few publications before they try to obtain a wide membership in the state. Although no drive for membership is being made at the present time it is the desire of the board of councillors to enlist the active cooperation and assistance of the students in history in the United States whose particular field is Spain in America. Under proper conditions, the society would offer an opportunity for the publication of monographs upon Florida history."

The HISPANIC AMERICAN REVIEW wishes the new society a long and successful life. It ventures to hope that the obscure pages of Florida's history will be illumined by the publication of new evidence from the old originals. The society has set itself an ambitious task, but there seems to have been careful planning unaccompanied by useless rushing ahead blindly. This ought to give results which will be welcomed by scholars and all interested in the history of Florida. There should be many discoveries of historical nuggets.

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At the 36th annual meeting of the American Historical Association, held at St. Louis, December 27-30, 1921, one conference was devoted to Hispanic American history. Those appearing on the program were Charles W. Hackett, "Materials for Spanish history in the Genaro García Library"; Arthur S. Aiton, "The establishment of the vice-royalty in the new world—a projection of Spanish institutions"; William Spence Robertson, "The policy of Spain toward her revolted colonies in 1823-1824"; and William W. Pierson, Jr., "Some reflections on the Cabildo". Professor Herbert I. Priestley was chairman of the conference.

At the 38th meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, which was held at Baltimore, on December 28-30, 1921, a session, of which Professor E. C. Hills was chairman, was devoted to Spanish-American and Brazilian literatures. The session was an informal discussion of these literatures, with special emphasis on their place in the curricula of our schools and colleges. There was a good attendance, and considerable discussion. A communication was read from Dr. Carlos Castro Ruiz, of Chile, consul-general for Chile in Washington, D. C. Dr. Manoel de Oliveira Lima had expected to be present, but was unavoidably detained in Washington. No definitive recommendations were made, and the session was simply adjourned.

At the forthcoming meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association to be held at Iowa City, Iowa, one session will be devoted to "United States-Mexican Relations since 1848". The tentative program includes a paper by Mr. Will Buckley, of Austin and New York, and president of the American Association of Mexico. The title of this paper will be "Woodrow Wilson's Mexican Policy". Mr. Buckley has lived a number of years in Mexico and was interpreter and secretary for the Mexican delegation at the Ontario Falls International Conference in 1914. Other papers include one by Dr. J. Fred Rippy, of the University of Chicago, on some phases of United States-Mexican relations since 1848, and one by Dr. Charles W. Hackett of the University of Texas on "The recognition of the governments of Juarez, Diaz, and Madero by that of the United States".—CHARLES W. HACKETT.

The Pan-American Student League is promoting a "Festa do Idioma" in honor of the Portuguese language and the literatures of Brazil and Portugal. The "Festa" will be held on March 18, in Earl Hall, Columbia University. The speakers for the evening will be Professor Gerig, of Columbia University, Dr. Helio Lobo, Brazilian consul-general at New York, Dr. Euclides da Costa, Portuguese vice-consul, and others. Mr. Alfredo Oswald, a Brazilian pianist of note, will play Brazilian music. Patrons for the "Festa" are the Brazilian ambassador in Washington, Dr. Alencar; the Portuguese minister, Viscount d'Alte; Dr. Manoel de Oliveira Lima, diplomat, historian, and scholar; Professor Maro Jones, Dr. Isaac Goldberg, Dr. James A. Robertson, Professor Coutinho, and other prominent scholars and friends of the Portuguese language.—GILBERTO FREYRE.



Under the auspices of the Public Lectures Committee of the University of Texas, Dr. Herbert E. Bolton of the University of California will deliver two lectures at the University of Texas in May of this year. The first of these will be "Spain's Imprint upon the Western Hemisphere." The second will be "The Development of Scholarship in Spanish American and Southwestern History during the last twenty-five years".—CHARLES W. HACKETT.

The work of cataloguing the Geñaro García Library of Mexicana at the University of Texas has been begun and will be pushed to completion as rapidly as possible. This library contains 11,000 bound volumes; 16,000 pamphlets; numerous complete or practically complete files of Mexican and Spanish newspapers and magazines; and 400,000 pages of unpublished manuscript materials. In the latter are included the private archives of ten of Mexico's leading statesmen of the nineteenth century. This library was acquired by the University of Texas last year at a cost of \$110,000.—CHARLES W. HACKETT.

Dr. Víctor A. Belaúnde, professor of the University of Lima, in Peru, official lecturer of the Instituto de las Españas, and owner of *Mercurio Peruano*, is offering a course in Hispanic American literature at the spring session of Columbia University.—C. K. JONES.

Dr. John Caspar Branner, president emeritus of Stanford University, has recently died at his home near Palo Alto. Dr. Branner was a geologist of note, and the greatest American authority on earthquakes and on Brazilian geology. He was, besides, an eminent scholar, knowing well a number of languages and intimately the Portuguese language. He is the author of a Portuguese grammar, and shortly before his death had finished a translation of Herculano's *Origem da Inquisição em Portugal*. Dr. Branner will also be remembered for the excellent Brazilian collection, now in Stanford University, which numbers about 10,000 volumes.—GILBERTO FREYRE.

Dr. Charles E. Chapman, of the University of California, leaves for a short trip to Central America on April 12, for the purpose of investigating the Central American attitude toward Central American union, as well as the attitude of Central Americans with respect to the position of the United States in Nicaragua and relations with the United States in general. His visit will be confined chiefly to Nica-

ragua and Costa Rica, and his investigations must necessarily be brief, as he is to teach in Columbia University during the summer session.

Dr. Isaac J. Cox and Dr. William H. Haas, of Northwestern University, will visit South America this year, leaving for New Orleans about May 1, and thence going first to Peru via Panama. They will visit also, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. In the last named country, Dr. Cox will act as delegate from the United States to the historical congress to be held in September. It is hoped that other scholars will also attend that congress.

James A. Robertson has been appointed secretary of the Committee on the Historical Congress at Rio de Janeiro for the year 1922, to take the place of Dr. Julius Klein, who was forced to resign because of the press of other duties. Mr. John B. Stetson, Jr., is chairman of the committee, and Professor Percy A. Martin, vice-chairman. Other members of the committee are Messrs. Charles Lyon Chandler, Isaac J. Cox, Charles H. Cunningham, Manoel de Oliveira Lima, Edwin V. Morgan, Constantine E. McGuire, and William Lytle Schurz.